

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO HUMAN SERVICES SYSTEM

- ☐ 385 North Arrowhead Avenue - San Bernardino, CA 92415-0160 - (909) 884-4056
- ☐ 1647 East Holt Boulevard - Ontario, CA 91761 - (909) 458-9673
- ☐ 13911 Park Avenue, Suite 200 - Victorville, CA 92392 - (760) 243-3773
- ☐ San Bernardino County Vector Control Program
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Adelanto	Montclair
Apple Valley	Needles
Barstow	Ontario
Big Bear Lake	Rancho Cucamonga
Chino	Redlands
Chino Hills	Rialto
Colton	San Bernardino
Fontana	Twentynine Palms
Grand Terrace	Upland
Hesperia	Victorville
Highland	Yucaipa
Loma Linda	Yucca Valley

WEST NILE VIRUS CONFIRMED IN 2 MORE DEAD CROWS IN SAN BERNARDINO

West Nile Virus (WNV) has been detected in two additional dead crows in the City of San Bernardino. The test confirmation was received from the State Department of Health Services last Friday. The first crow was collected by San Bernardino County Public Health Vector Control staff on November 20th from an address on the 3000 block of North Pepper Street in east San Bernardino. The second was picked up on November 25th from an address on the 6900 Block of Reedy Avenue in Highland. County Health Officer Thomas Prendergast said, "This confirmation extends the range of WNV positive eastward into the northeast area of San Bernardino and the City of Highland." Dr. Prendergast further stated the County's Vector Control Program is working with the concerned cities and residents to get the message out about this disease.

So far the County of San Bernardino has detected a total of nine dead birds positive to WNV. With the exception of one sparrow, all dead birds were American crows. The first crow was picked up in Rialto on September 12th and the others were collected from the areas of Rialto, Ontario and San Bernardino over the last two months.

Mosquito numbers are currently low and will significantly decrease through the winter season; however the County is preparing for the next mosquito season that will most likely be difficult year for WNV.

Vector Control staff will be distributing fact sheets and looking for water sources on properties within a mile radius of the location where the birds were picked up. Since mosquitoes lay their eggs on standing water, residents are encouraged to look for and eliminate any standing or stagnant water on their properties.

Dr Prendergast said pools and ponds left unchlorinated are a major source of mosquito breeding and urge residents to keep their pools clean. Green pools impacts entire neighborhoods, and mosquitoes breeding in such pools fly over property lines to bite people several blocks away. Therefore, it is in the best interest of residents to ensure neighbors do their part by chlorinating or draining their pools and eliminating any standing water. Please report green pools and other sources of mosquito breeding to the Public Health Vector Control Program at (800) 44-ABATE or (909) 388-4600.

Less than 1 percent of individuals, primarily elderly and those with lowered immune systems, may develop serious illness such as encephalitis and meningitis. Most individuals who are infected with WNV will not experience any illness. Others will have only mild symptoms, such as fever, headache and body aches.

WNV is transmitted to humans and animals through a mosquito bite. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds. Transmission of WNV from human to human generally does not occur.

Detecting the movement of the virus now that it has arrived in San Bernardino County is crucial to protect the public's health. San Bernardino County citizens can protect themselves from mosquito bites by taking these precautions:

- Avoid spending time outside when mosquitoes are most active, especially at dawn and dusk.
- When outdoors, wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts.
- Apply insect repellent containing DEET. Follow the label directions when using any repellent.

- Make sure that doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.
- Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property that can support mosquito breeding.

Since horses are susceptible to WNV and a vaccine is available for horses, horse owners are advised to contact their veterinarians about timely vaccinations.

The Department of Public Health encourages the public to participate in the WNV surveillance program by reporting birds that have been dead for less than 48 hours to the County Vector Control toll-free hotline: 800-44-ABATE or to the California Department of Health Services toll-free hotline: 877-WNV-BIRD. In Southern California, all birds, other than pigeons and chickens, can be reported to these hotlines.

Before calling for instructions, individuals should note the type of bird found, its location and condition. The bird should show no signs of decomposition or maggot infestation. People should not attempt to catch or handle sick or dead birds without gloves, though there is no evidence humans can get the virus from handling live or dead infected birds.

For more information about WNV or to report dead birds, visit the California Department of Health Services Web site at www.westnile.ca.gov/ or www.sbcounty.gov/dehs.

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